

A SHORT ACCOUNT
OF THE
AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE,
COLLECTED FROM LOCAL KNOWLEDGE,
FROM THE EVIDENCE GIVEN AT THE BAR
OF
BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,
AND,
FROM TRACTS WRITTEN UPON THAT SUBJECT,

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* This is a very ancient Traffic. vid. Leo.

* vid. Leo; and Consul Fraser's
Account.

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AS the African Slave Trade has been of late the Subject of public Examination and private Discussion, a brief Account of it may, perhaps, not be unacceptable to those who have not had an Opportunity of hearing the Evidence that has been given at the Bar of both Houses of Parliament, or leisure to peruse the various Publications which the present Enquiry has occasioned.

A Trade for Negro Slaves is carried on from the River Senegal in 16 Degrees North Latitude, to Cape Negro, in 16 Degrees South: which comprehends a tract of near 4000 Miles of Sea Coast; and includes the greatest Part of the interior Country, within the above Limits, from the Confines of Mount Atlas, across the immense Continent of Africa, to Mozambique, on the Eastern Coast; *and from thence to Asia.*

FROM the Nations bordering on the Rivers Senegal and Gambia, the Emperor of Morocco procures annually Recruits for his black Cavalry; and his Subjects are furnished from thence with whatever Slaves they have Occasion for.* Caravans also ~~travel from thence~~ across the Continent, to Upper Egypt, with considerable Numbers of Negro Slaves; who are forwarded from thence, either from Alexandria, by Sea, or marched through Asia Minor, to Constantinople.* From the same Quarter, including the Country towards the River Sierra Leon, Slaves are collected for supplying the different States of Barbary; from the Ports of which, some of them are sent to the Morea, and to
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the Turkish Islands, in the Mediterranean: hence it is, that this Part of the Country affords but comparatively few Slaves to the European Traders. From Mozambique, and the Ports on the Eastern Coast of Africa, great Numbers are sent to Persia, Goa, and other Parts of the East Indies, and in proportion as the culture of the West Indian Islands, and of the European Settlements in America, has been extended, a demand for the Labour of African Negroes has regularly encreased there; and now amounts to about eighty thousand annually: of which the British purchase about 40,000; the French 20,000; the Portuguese 10,000; the Dutch 6000, and the Danes 4000.—

Of the forty thousand purchased by the British, about 5 per cent. or a twentieth Part, are calculated to die on the Voyage; and three-fourths of those that arrive in the West Indies are disposed of to the French and Spaniards; the remainder are distributed in the British Islands, chiefly in Jamaica; the greatest Part of which is still in a state of Nature, and will require an addition of five or six thousand Slaves annually, for many Years, to complete its Cultivation; which is the Case also, tho' in a less Degree, of the Islands of Grenada, Dominica, St. Vincents, and some other Places; particularly of the Bahamas, and of the Settlement in the Bay of Honduras: the former of which is now the retreat of the unfortunate Loyalists, banished from the United States, where they have a virgin Soil to cultivate, which promises no ungrateful return, as soon as the necessary Labourers can be procured; and the latter affords an Asylum to the British Settlers, who have lately been obliged to abandon their Possessions on the Mosquitto Shore, ~~the Mosquitto Shore~~.

WHEN the prodigious demand for African Negroes (which has existed for Time immemorial in Mauritania, Egypt, Persia, and the East,) is considered; and, in addition to that, the immense Exportation of late Years to America and the West Indies, it might be presumed that a visible decrease of Inhabitants

* Sir James Stewart says. That the ^{would} population of Africa is promoted by the export of people as the stock is augmented by killing the Warriors: For there is more Subsistence

would be the Consequence of these annual Drains ; but from the concurrent Testimony of the most intelligent Persons, who visit that Country, it does not appear to be the Case : which is neither improbable, nor difficult to account for. *Said Philosophy*

THOSE who have been both in Africa and America, say that they have been struck with the Appearance of about an equal Population in the state of Virginia, and in those Parts of Africa, that lie upon the Coast ; and, add, that from the best Information which they could get, the interior Parts are, at least, as fully inhabited, as those which they had an Opportunity of seeing. Virginia comprehends about 30,000 square Miles, and, including the Negroes, is said to contain 800,000 Inhabitants : taking this for the Basis of a Calculation, it may reasonably be presumed that Negroland, which extends, as was mentioned before, from the Senegal to Cape Negro, and from the Atlantic Eastward to the Indian Ocean, and contains, exclusive of Nubia, and Abissinia, at least, four millions of square Miles, cannot have less than 106 millions of Inhabitants ; which are more than Great Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Italy, Holland, and Switzerland, collectively can boast of. *In Africa and*

in Asia people subsist easily.

A Late Writer, well acquainted with Africa, from his long residence there, has pointed out the very different Circumstances of Europe and Africa, with regard to the Advantages, and Disadvantages attending the Propagation of the Species in each. What Numbers of both Sexes, says he. are there in this Quarter of the Globe, who grow up and die without ever having Children ! The increase of Luxury has always been an enemy to Matrimony ; and, accordingly, we find many decline it from Choice, and many from Necessity. The vain are deterred from it, from an unwillingness to abridge any Part of the splendor of their Appearance ; and the indigent, from a certainty of multiplying their Necessities. The long absence of Men from their Wives, on Account of Trade and other Avocations, to say nothing

thing of War and its direful Consequences, necessarily reduces the Number of Births. A State of Servitude precludes a State of Matrimony, in a great Part of the Community; for there are few who will keep a married Servant of either Sex; but, above all, Religion, in the Roman Catholic Countries, strikes the heaviest Blow at Propagation. These, and other Obstacles to Marriage and Population, which exist and are likely to continue, in the Countries mentioned above, prevent them from having a yearly Recruit of, at least, some millions of People; yet, under all these Disadvantages, the Number of their Inhabitants are supposed to increase.

IN Africa none of these Impediments prevail; there we find desire, unchecked by the Dread of Want, taking its full Scope. A Turn to Speculation, Retirement, and abstracted Studies, Resolutions of Celibacy from disappointed Love; unmarried Servants, long Voyages, and Religious Vows, are utterly unknown. Their Wars are neither so bloody nor attended with such Circumstances of destruction as ours.* The Means of Subsistence, in so vast, and, in general, so fruitful a Country, being remarkably easy, no Person doubts having it in his power to provide for his Family; and, when that anxiety is once surmounted, we may trust to natural Inclination for the rest. Polygamy is universally practised in Africa, and contributes greatly to its Populousness. It would be hurtful to that of Europe; where the Number of Males and Females born is nearly equal, or at least differs only about as much as to make up for the Number of the former that are cut off, by Accidents attending their active State: but in Africa, where no man goes without a Wife from a scarcity of Women, and in short, an unmarried black Man is seldom or never seen; where the richest Men, having many Wives, does not prevent the poorest from having one or two, the Number of Women must greatly exceed

* Long Voyages, tedious Imprisonments, Shipwrecks, Bombardments, &c. &c.

ceed that of the Men ; nor is this a singular Case, for the same happens at Bantam, and other Parts of the East Indies, that lie in the same Latitudes : besides, there is a great Majority of Male Slaves carried out of Africa, which still adds to the relative Proportion of Women left behind ; so that there must be an Advantage to Population in admitting Polygamy in a Country, where almost every Man has two or three Wives, and several as many hundreds. Hence it is, that Africa can not only continue supplying all the Demands that offer for her surplus Inhabitants, in the Quantities it has hitherto done, but, if necessity required it, could spare Thousands, nay, Millions more, and go on doing so to the End of Time ; *while the Climate & Manners remain the same.*

THE vast Country of Negroland is divided into a multitude of States, the greatest Part of which have never yet been explored ; but in those which have been visited by Europeans, the Government is found to vary from the most absolute Tyranny in some, to somewhat less despotic and oppressive in others. The Bulk of the People are Slaves to a few Freemen ; and in some States there is not an Individual free but the Prince : from every Circumstance of Intelligence and Observation, the general State of the Negro, in Africa, is that of Slavery and Oppression, in every Sense of the Word. In Dahomy, the King is absolute Master of the Life, Liberty, and Property, of every Person in his Dominions ; and he sports with them, with the most savage and wanton Cruelty. Piles of their Heads are placed as Ornaments before his Palace Gates on festival Days, and on every public Occasion ; and the Floors leading to his Apartment are strewed with their Bodies, to impress those who approach him with Respect and Awe. The Area before his Bed-chamber, is paved with the Skulls of Prisoners taken in War, that he may daily enjoy the savage Gratification of literally trampling on the Heads of his Enemies. Parents have neither Property, nor Interest in their Children, in the Dahoman Territories ; they belong entirely to the King, and are all taken, by his Order, from their

their Mothers, at an early Age, and distributed in Villages remote from the Place of their Nativity; where there is but little Chance for their being seen, or, at least, recognized by their Parents afterwards. His Motive for this is, that there may be no family Connexions, no Associations that might be injurious to his unlimited Power. Each Individual is detached, and unconnected; and, having no Relative for whom he is interested, is solicitous only for his own Safety, which he consults by the most abject Submission, and implicit Obedience. There, paternal Affections, and filial Love scarcely exist; for Mothers, instead of cherishing, endeavour to suppress those Attachments for their Offsprings, which, they are certain, will be violated, as soon as their Children are able to undergo the Fatigue of being removed from them. Yet, this worst of Slavery does not prevent Population, as it, doubtless, would in a civilized Part of the World; where Liberty is deservedly considered in so rapturous a Light. A Man or Woman of Sensibility,—That Sensibility encreased by Reflection, would, under such a Yoke, be deaf to the calls of Inclination, and refuse to give Existence to Wretches, doomed to inherit the Miseries of their Parents: But the idea of Slavery is different in an African; and in Dahomy, the King is revered with a Degree of Respect little short of Adoration. Had the Negro the Love of rational Freedom existing in his Breast, it is next to impossible that he could act thus. But, alas! he knows nothing of this inestimable Blessing, nor ever enjoyed it! The Country which gave him Birth, the Soil from which he sprung, produces no such Blossom; and, should it ever appear, which is highly improbable, instead of the fostering Hand to nurture and bring it to Maturity, the bloody and unrelenting Arm of Tyranny is eternally held up, ready to cut it down.

THE Credibility of these extraordinary Facts does not depend upon mere hearsay: Dahomy is a maritime Kingdom, in which the British, French, and Portuguese have been permitted to erect Forts for the Protection of their Trade; and the Veracity of
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of what is here related, is authenticated by the indubitable Testimony of many who have resided there: *which may be seen in every Collection of Voyages.*

THE Africans have been in the Practice, from Time immemorial, of selling their Countrymen, and never entertained any more Doubt of their Right to do so, than we do of sending Delinquents to Botany Bay, or to Tyburn; deeming it fair and just to dispose of their Slaves, Prisoners of War, and Felons, according to their own established Laws and Customs. Great Enormities, they punish with Death; but, unless it be in such despotic Governments as Dahomy, few but Criminals are sold to the Whites, except Prisoners taken in War; who would inevitably be put to Death, did not a more profitable Mode offer of disposing of them: and hence it is, that Persons of some Rank in their own Country, some times become Slaves in the West Indies and American Colonies; but the House of Bondage, strictly speaking, may be called a Land of Freedom to them: where, notwithstanding they do not enjoy Pre-eminence, they may be comfortable; and where, although prevented from exercising Cruelty on others, they are always protected themselves. Those who are guilty of Theft, Adultery, or the imputed Crime of Witchcraft, if they escape Death, are sold for Slaves. To deter them from the Commission of these Crimes, their Situation in foreign Slavery, is represented to be attended with the severest Tortures; which, fortunately for them however, are not realized: as will appear hereafter. Nor is it to be wondered at, in a Country of so great Extent, and so little Civilization, that the greatest Part of the Africans, brought to the European Colonies, are condemned to Slavery, for Acts of Delinquency; since Great Britain alone, under the superior Advantages of its Religion, Laws, and Manners, produces annually above 2000 Convicts. *q^d the true Number.*

SINCE the Labour of African Slaves has been found indispensibly necessary for the Cultivation of the West Indian Islands,

has and American Plantations, from the utter impossibility of white People being able to undergo that Fatigue, every European Nation, having Colonies there, ~~have~~ been solicitous to acquire a share in this Traffic; nor has the most scrupulous of them entertained a Doubt of their Right to purchase, what the Africans had a right to dispose of.

AMONG the Adventurers in this Trade, the British possess at present the greatest Share of it. It was during the Government of the Commonwealth, that Negroes were carried, in any Numbers, to the West Indies, and then, chiefly to Barbadoes: a few Negroes were taken to Virginia, by a Dutch Ship, so early as 1620; but it was the Royal African Company, established in 1672, that first carried on, from hence, a vigorous Commerce to Africa. We may form an Opinion of the Magnitude of it, in its most flourishing State, prior to the Revolution in 1688, by considering that the Company employed thirty Ships annually, which delivered about 5000 Negroes in the West Indies. The Increase of it to its present State, may be attributed to the enterprizing Spirit of the Merchants; to the superior Address of those employed in the executive Part of it; to the Opulence of the Manufacturers, which enables them to extend a Credit to the former, beyond what can be had in any other Country; and to the liberal Supply allowed by Government annually, for the maintenance of several Forts, and Factories in Africa. From these concurring Circumstances, the British Planters are supplied with Negroes, on more reasonable Terms than their Neighbours; and a large Surplus left, which are disposed of to the French and Spaniards for Specie, and other valuable Commodities. 5000 at £40 = £200,000.

THE Importance of this Trade to Great Britain, almost exceeds Calculation. It immediately employs about 120 Ships which sail annually for Africa, whose Cargoes exceed a Million Sterling; some of which are the Productions of the British Settlements in the East and West Indies; but above 700,000l.

1786	— 146 —	21,483.	— £583,052 —	£176,076.	— £305,600.
1787	— 137 —	22,263.	— 401,593 —	186,258 —	266,600.

is invested in British Manufactures only. ^{Circumstances} The Returns of these Cargoes are computed at a Million and an half. The Artificers and Mechanics employed at Liverpool alone, receive 100,000l. annually for Labour and Materials employed in equipping the Ships engaged in it; and exclusive of the large Sums paid for Seamen's Wages, the Captains and Officers Commissions and Privilege amount, at least, to 50,000l. annually; which is generally realized there, and has contributed greatly to the rapid Increase of that flourishing Town.

THE African Trade, connected as it is with the West Indian Commerce, and that to the remaining continental Colonies, and Newfoundland Fishery, is of the utmost Consequence to the employment of many thousands of our Fellow-subjects, to the Naval Power of Britain, and to the Royal Revenues; all which are conjoined by sympathetic Ties. The Value of three Millions, at least, of domestic Manufactures, exclusive of other Merchandize, annually find a profitable Vent by means of the African and West Indian Trades; and above five Millions of Property, arising from the Labour of Negro Slaves, employed in the West Indian Islands, is yearly imported from thence; which contributes not less than a Million and an half annually to the Revenue of this Kingdom. To carry on this immense Traffic, and to supply these Islands with Lumber and Provisions, from the continental Colonies, and Newfoundland Fishery, gives constant Employment to, at least, a thousand Ships, and to above 15000 Mariners. To enumerate the fatal Consequences that would inevitably ensue from a Check given to this extensive Commerce, exceeds the prescribed Limits of this short Sketch, but they shall be hinted at in the Sequel.

THE Adventurers in this Trade, who have seen for near a Century past, the Society for propagating Christianity, composed of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and many pious Doctors of the established Church, deriving, as Masters,

Total
1,064,813. *Customhouse Value.*
854,572.

Barbados Masters, a yearly income from the Labour of their Negroe Slaves in the West Indies, could not consider it as contrary to the Spirit of the Scriptures, or to the Principles of Morality: nor could they regard this Traffic as inconsistent with the natural Rights of Mankind, when they read in the Statute of 9 and 10 of King William, which was made avowedly for extending the Trade to Africa, *That this Trade was highly beneficial to this Kingdom; a Declaration of a King, who was the Patron of Liberty, and of a Parliament that had vindicated the natural Rights of Mankind; And in the Statute of 23d. Geo. II. "That the Trade to Africa is "very advantageous to Great Britain, and necessary to the Plantations;"* Which Act was made by a Whig King, and a Whig Parliament; who, when they dissolved the late African Company, granted a very large Sum of Money as a Compensation for their Rights.

ENCOURAGED by these, and various other Acts of Parliament, which declared the African Trade to be highly beneficial to this Nation, many Merchants engaged their Fortunes in it; nor could they imagine the *Purchase* of Negroes, from those States of Africa, who have the same Right to dispose of them as the Parliament has to inflict the Pains of Banishment, or Death, or the *Sale* of them as illegal, when they knew that many able Lawyers, learned Judges, and illustrious Chancellors had expressly declared this Purchase and Sale to be lawful; and to have transferred to the Master such a Property, as could not be affected by local Changes, or subsequent Baptism: and that in Conformity to the Declarations of these Judges and Lawyers, the Statute of the 5th of his late Majesty, subjected the Negroes in the West Indian Islands, as well as the Lands which they laboured, to the Payment of all Debts, owing either to his Majesty, or to any of his Subjects; and directed these Negroes to be sold, like any other Chattle, for Satisfaction of such Debts. In Consequence of which, the 500,000 Negroes, now belonging to the Planters in those Islands, are pledged by the Legislature, and by the Nation, for Payment of the

the Debts that are due, either to the British Merchants, or Manufacturers, or to the Subjects of foreign Princes; who, by a late Act of Parliament, have been encouraged and enabled to lend Money to these Planters, on the Security of their Lands, and of the Labour of their Negroes.

YET this Trade, so highly beneficial to the Adventurers, and important to the State; a Trade sanctioned by the Clergy, supported by the Judges, and authorized by the Laws, has lately been condemned both in Principle and Practice. By the Law and usage of Parliament, the most trivial Right of the most inconsiderable Subject, is never taken away, even for the public Good itself, without a manifest Necessity, and a full Compensation. Yet, an Attempt has been made, and Measures are still unremittingly pursuing, to deprive the British Planters, Merchants, and Manufacturers, of the Advantage of this important Traffic; and, under a Pretence of Regulation, Restrictions have already been imposed which strike at its Existence: but, though the Liberty of Negroes seems now to be the favorite Idea, the Liberty of Britons to pursue their lawful Occupations should not be forgotten: for the Principle which has raised the Commerce and Navigation of this Country, and, with them, the landed Interest and Revenues of the Kingdom, from inconsiderable Beginnings, to their present Greatness, is the *Right* which every Man in it possesses, to carry on his own Business, in the Way most advantageous to himself, without any sudden Interruption in the Pursuit of it; and the *Consciousness* which he has, of the steady Protection of the Laws, in the Prosecution of it.

AT a Time when a neighbouring Nation, our Rival in Commerce as well as Arms, is lavishing unprecedented Bounties to extend its African Trade, and endeavours to promote it by every possible Encouragement, a Society has been formed here for the
avowed

avowed Purpose of abolishing it ; who, suffering themselves to be imposed upon, by lending too credulous an Ear to that Kind of Information which they sought with Avidity, without duly considering by what Means, or by whom it was procured, have laboured to inflame the Passions, and prejudice the Minds of the Community, by various Publications, containing Mistatements of Facts, and Misrepresentations of Characters. It is an easy Task to draw in glowing Colours, that Picture of human Woe, which shall excite Compassion, and rouse Indignation ; and in doing this, the Society for the Abolition have succeeded to their Wishes : By their personal Assiduities, and Publications ; by their circular Letters to the Mayors of Corporations, and Addresses to Grand Juries, they have raised the Torch of civil Contest in the Realm, which may eventually spread the Flame of Rebellion in the Colonies. Their Clamours have reached the Legislature ; and those concerned in the Trade, have been called upon to defend their Rights and injured Reputation, at the Bar of both Houses of Parliament.

IT has appeared in Evidence there, that to serve a particular Purpose, the Mortality of the Mariners and of the Negroes, had been exaggerated beyond the Bounds of Probability and Truth : That the African Trade, so far from being destructive to the Lives of British Seamen, in the Degree asserted, is, in Fact, a Nursery for training up Men to that useful Profession†. That

† For it is in this Trade alone that those, who are desirous of embracing a Sea Life, at an Age too advanced to commence an Apprenticeship, can find Employment ; as the Crews of Vessels in any other Trade, consist of Seamen and Apprentices only : but in this, one half at least of each Ship's Company is composed of Landsmen, young Men, who in two or three Voyages acquire as much professional Knowledge as qualifies them afterwards for any Station of a Sea Life, *excluding of the Carpenters, Coopers and others this who are employed, by the African Trade, on shore,*

this Trade is carried on as much to the Ease and Comfort of those that are the Subjects of it, and also of those who conduct it, as it is possible for human Ingenuity to devise. That the Ships employed in it, are so peculiarly constructed for the Accommodation of the Negroes, as to be unsuitable for any other Trade. That the Opinion, which has been industriously propagated, of these Ships being unequal to the Numbers which were said to be crowded in them, is groundless; from a Survey and Admeasurement of them, by an experienced naval Officer appointed by Government. That, on the Voyage from Africa to the West Indies, the Negroes are well fed, comfortably lodged, and have every Attention paid to their Health, Cleanliness, and Convenience. That the Captain's Cabin is appropriated to the Use of such as are sick; where proper Care, and medical Aid, are duly administered to them; and, that by an admirable Regulation, the Emoluments of the Captains and Officers, employed in this Trade, are connected with, and depend upon, the Health and good Condition of those whom they have the Charge of conveying. The Mode of obtaining Negroe Slaves in Africa, has been demonstrated to be in a Way perfectly fair, and equitable; by a Barter with the Natives. The Crime of Kidnapping, as it is termed, with which the Traders to Africa have been reproached, proves to be groundless: for the African Committee, whose Business it is to take Cognizance of such an Offence, and for which the Law inflicts an heavy Penalty, have reported, that but one Instance of it has come before them in the Course of near forty Years. It has also been shewn, that, in Consequence of this Trade, many innocent Lives are spared, that would otherwise be sacrificed to the superstitious Rites and Ceremonies of the Country; many Prisoners of War exempted from Torture, and Death; and the Punishment of many Crimes commuted from Death to Slavery; and, finally, that it is the lot of most of those
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that are brought to the Colonies, who, generally speaking, were Slaves in their own Country, only to exchange a black Master for a White one. That the Wars which have always existed in Africa, have no Connexion with the Slave Trade, is evident from the Universality of the Practice of it between Communities in a Savage State. The oldest Writers, as *Leo*, and others, have represented the Africans as living in a State of War, and Rapine, long before the Commerce with Europeans, was introduced amongst them. Besides the Motives of Ambition and Resentment, which the African has in common with civilized Nations, the turbulent and irascible Disposition of a Negroe, prompts him to harass his Neighbour; and, lured by the Love of Plunder, before he ever saw an European Commodity, as the Value of an Article depends upon the Estimation it holds in the Fancy of him who covets it, the rude Productions of the Country, the Trinkets of Gold, or Ivory, &c. were as much an object of his Desire formerly, as the Acquisition of European Manufactures can be at present. So far from the Whites being necessary to these Wars, as has been unjustly alledged; it is notorious, that the Europeans trading there, deprecate a War as the greatest Inconvenience that can happen to them: Trade is entirely suspended during its Continuance; and the Term of their Voyages is thereby protracted much beyond the usual Time. Hence arises an inevitable Increase of Expence, and an additional Risk of Sicknefs and Mortality, which cannot be compensated by a few additional Slaves, that may occasionally be brought to Market in Consequence of it. The Assertion, that farther supplies of Slaves from Africa, are not necessary to the Cultivation of our Islands, scarcely merits a serious Refutation. It is dictated by the same mistaken Policy, that preferred the Wilds of Canada, at the Close of a former War, to the Possession of the truly valuable Sugar Islands; which, after being wrested from our Enemies and Rivals, at the Expence of much

modern
writers
have
represented
the same
facts since

much Blood and Treasure, were again restored to them in an evil Hour. Those who have the good Fortune already to enjoy Sugar Plantations, may wish for the exclusive Possession of them; and look upon every additional Establishment of that Sort as interfering with their Interest. But which is to preponderate, private Considerations or public and national Welfare? Are no new Settlements to be made, or old ones to be extended? Is Industry to be limited, and Improvement prohibited, in the most valuable of all our foreign Possessions; where a Supply from Propagation alone, adequate to the Services required, is never to be expected?

The products & advantages of the W. India Islands, have always been in proportion to the Number of Negroes on them.

HOW the Negroes, occupied in the Colonies, are now treated, remains next to be considered; and cannot be better related than nearly in the Words of an elegant Writer, who has very lately favored the Public with his Observations on this Subject.

NEGRO Property, is an Object of such Value and Importance to the Proprietor, that he is disposed to cherish it by every prudent Method; and, independent of what he owes as a Man, and a Christian, he feels an adventitious Affection for it, resulting from Interest. Hence it is, that the Happiness and Misery of Negroes, in the West Indies, depend almost totally on themselves. If a Negro is slothful or flagitious, he is, like Rascals and Drones of Society in every well regulated Community, poor and miserable; and subject to Correction, as a Punishment for his own Vices, and for the Instruction of others: but, on the Contrary, if he is industrious in his own Concerns, and attentive to the Interest of his Superior, mild in Temper, and tractable in Disposition, he is entitled to Indulgencies, which

thousands, even in this Country, would be happy to enjoy.— The Habitations of the Slaves, on every Estate, are situated near the Dwelling-House of the Owner, or Overseer; that they may be under more immediate Inspection. These are, in general, comfortable and commodious; with a Garden to each, encircled with Plantain, Bananna, and Orange Trees: and stocked with Roots, and Vegetables, for domestic Uses; and, even a Surplus to spare, which is carried occasionally to Market, to purchase those little Necessaries and Luxuries, which they wish to enjoy. Besides this, there is a portion of Land on every Estate, called the *Negro-Grounds*, of which each Slave is allowed as much as he can cultivate, for his own Use. This Land, from the Fertility of the Soil, requires only a small portion of occasional Labour; a few Hours in a Week is sufficient, and the Negro is allowed, independent of every Sunday, which he has to himself throughout the Year, one Day in a Fortnight, for † eight Months of it, for cultivating his Grounds. In these Habitations, there is an Arrangements of Appartments, and Propriety of Furniture; a Supply of Utensils; and even a Parade of Apparel; little to be expected in the Possession of Slaves. They have each their Styes of Hogs, and little Flocks of Poultry; some of them reserved for Sale, and the rest appropriated to their Evening's Repast; this, with a comfortable Night's Rest, enables them to return with Vigour to the next Morning's Work, which, however strange it may seem, is not so hard as that of many of the labouring Poor in Britain. But what renders the Situation of the Negro peculiarly comfortable, is the Provision made for him during Sicknes, and Old Age. On the first Symptoms of Indisposition, he is instantly exempted from all Labour,

† Crop Time occupies the other four.

Labour, and lodged in a House particularly appropriated for the Purpose, where he is visited daily by a Practitioner of Medicine; supplied with fresh Viands, Vegetables, and even Wine; attended constantly by a Nurse, who acts likewise as an under medical Assistant, and is not desired, or even allowed to resume Labour, until his Health and Strength enable him to undergo its Fatigues. Let Indisposition continue ever so long; no immediate Loss, no Confusion or Derangement in his little Property, is the Consequence. Poverty, Want, and Affliction, are, by no means, the Concomitants of his Sick-bed: every thing, through the Assistance of his Fellow-labourers and the Direction of his Superiors, goes on, and is attended to, in the same Way, as if he were immediately on the Spot: His Grounds are worked; his Stock raised; his Fruits and Products carried to Market, by his Family or Connections; and as he is amply supplied with every Necessary during his Confinement, instead of being poorer, he comes out of his Hospital a richer Man than when he went in. When old Age has rendered his farther Exertions useless, the hoary-headed Bondsman, becomes often the Partaker of Liberty; which sheds its kindly Beams upon his parting Day. Previous to this Period, it may be presumed, that some Property has been acquired, and a Situation of Comfort established.--- These he is allowed to enjoy unmolested, while the usual Proportion of Provisions and Clothing are annually given to him; his Children, and his Children's Children; his Friends and former Fellow-labourers; his Countrymen, and Fellow-passengers, are all near him, and are all ready to administer their Helps and Consolation. In short, instead of wretchedness, and chilling Penury, old Age, in this State, often wears away, and

snaps its slender Thread, as gently, and perhaps as imperceptibly, as in any Country whatever. It is a Fact worthy of Observation, that a Negro Slave in the West Indies, has scarcely ever been heard to express a Desire to return to his own Country ; nor, of the many who have obtained their Freedom there, has one put it into practice : but, on the Contrary, even newly imported Negroes, when threatened by the Overseer, upon some Fault or Neglect of theirs, to be sent back again, are seriously alarmed at it.

THERE now only remains, of the Proposed Plan of this short Sketch, to point out, briefly, what would be the probable, nay, the inevitable Consequence of the Abolition of a Trade, which is the connecting Medium of our foreign, with our Domestic Commerce. If it were to be taken out of the Chain, of which it composes so considerable a Link, and upon which our Manufactures so immediately depend, every Improvement in the West Indian Islands would immediately cease, and a Diminution of the Produce of the Lands, now under Cultivation there, would shortly follow. The Export of British Manufactures, which to Africa and the Colonies, amount, at least, to three Millions Sterling annually, would soon be reduced to nothing. The immense Sums, owing to this Country from the West Indies, would for ever remain unpaid ; and innumerable Bankruptcies would follow at Home. Few would be able any longer to consume taxable Commodities ; and, from the inevitable Decrease also, of the Import of West Indian Productions, there would be such a Deficiency of the national Revenue, as the Imposition of fresh Taxes, upon a People deprived of their accus-

tomed

tomed Resources of Opulence and Industry, could not possibly replace. A Decay of national Credit, and a Depreciation of Government Securities, would ensue, from an Inability to raise the public Supplies; and our national Importance would quickly decline, and be known to the next Generation, only by the Page of History. Our Navy, the Pride and Bulwark of Britain, the Terror and Admiration of the World, would no longer exist: *not be*
there would be neither Mariners to man it, nor Money to support *find*
 it. Ships would be unnecessary, as there would be neither *this*
 Goods to export, or to import. Shipwrights and other Mechanics, *in and*
 and Tradesmen, dependant on them, deprived of Employment,
 would want even the Necessaries of Life: Land would decrease
 in Value: The Rent of Houses would scarcely pay for their Repairs; and even the Livings of the Church be reduced to their original Statement in the King's Books. After so flagrant an Act of Oppression, the Merchants could no longer confide in Government, for the Continuation of those Privileges which they had for Ages enjoyed; and this Reflection would naturally throw a Damp on all future Enterprize, in every Branch of foreign Trade, as well as domestic Manufacture; for, however the Minds of some Men may be inflamed at this Moment, and however strenuous they may be in Opposition to the African Slave Trade, there must a Time come, when every Englishman, who is capable of reflecting at all, will weigh the Injustice of this Proceeding, abstracted from every Consideration of Humanity or Policy; and will then perceive the Instability of all commercial Establishments, in a Country, where the mistaken Zeal of a few could instigate the Legislature so grossly to invade the Rights of Individuals. These and many other Evils, may be reasonably expected

pected from the Abolition of a Trade, which we *may* relinquish; but which *cannot* be taken from us, by the Jealousy of foreign Powers: in this political *Felo de se* we must be our own Executioners.

TO obviate these Calamities, a Bill is now forming, against the ensuing Session of Parliament, from local Knowledge, and practical Experience; not a Bill of mere Theory, and idle Speculation, as lately appeared; but a Bill to obviate every Abuse, and establish every necessary Regulation in the African Trade: and that such a Bill may meet the Approbation of every Branch of the Legislature, and be passed into a Law, ought to be the earnest Wish of every BRITON.

F I N I S.

